



Brussels, 18 March 2021

Dear Prime Minister Rutte,

We're now one year into the pandemic and while progress on vaccine development has been impressive, much more needs to be done to ensure we end the pandemic and kickstart the global recovery.

In view of the European Council on March 25, we wanted to share with you our recommendations to ensure we take the fight against COVID to another level and start seeing the end of the pandemic as soon as possible. We hope that you, alongside the European Council, will agree to:

- **Fully funding the ACT-Accelerator.** Great progress has been made over the last year in funding global access to tests, treatments and vaccines but more needs to be done to allow ACT-A to deliver on its mission. At this stage, ACT-A still lacks USD 22bn in funding, with the Therapeutics and Diagnostics pillars particularly underfunded. We call on you to urgently make a new, additional pledge to ACT-A to help fill this financing gap.
- **Start to donate vaccine doses to Low- and Lower-Middle Income Countries:** The EU has purchased 1.36 billion vaccine doses<sup>1</sup> for a population of 447.5 million. While the rollout in the EU is still ramping up, we already know that there are many vaccines that risk being stuck in warehouses and the clock ticks towards their sell-by date, while most of the world's population remains without vaccines. Since we know these numbers, we can get organised now. EU member states and the Commission should therefore:
  - **Commit to giving away all excess doses to COVAX in parallel to rolling out domestic vaccination efforts.** There are many countries in the world which haven't received a single dose.
  - **Start to share some doses as soon as possible.** Dose sharing should begin as soon as possible even with small amounts, ramping up those amounts within Q2 at the latest, and would enable countries around the world to prioritise vaccinating healthcare workers and vulnerable groups helping to limit the spread of the virus and diminishing the risk of new variants. Manufacturers need to be alerted to these donations upstream in the process so that doses can be directed to where they are needed in the fastest and most cost-effective way possible. Further detail on this can be found in [our policy paper](#) on dose-sharing, cosigned by ten partner organisations alongside the Network.
- **Start preparing for the future by committing to a funding mechanism for pandemic preparedness and prevention.** We call on you and your fellow leaders to

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<sup>1</sup> Of the five leading vaccines on the market or awaiting regulatory approval: Pfizer, Moderna, Oxford/AZ, Novavax, J&J

establish an enduring international financing mechanism dedicated to rapidly accelerate global and national investments in pandemic preparedness. The priority should be on supporting Low- and Lower-Middle Income Countries with the weakest health systems to develop and implement robust national action plans for health security. President Biden has indicated support for such a mechanism through the US [National Security Directive 1](#), which prioritizes global pandemic preparedness as national security priority and directs his Administration to put forth plans for “*creating an enduring international catalytic financing mechanism for advancing and improving existing bilateral and multilateral approaches to global health security*”.

The emergence of new strains is putting progress at risk. The longer the virus is able to travel the world, the greater the risk of mutations and the greater the risk that the vaccines we do have will become ineffective. This is why global action - and global access - is essential to end the pandemic for everyone everywhere. Global solidarity is the fastest and most effective way to contain the pandemic, save lives, protect health care systems, and restore economies. We also cannot afford to await until this pandemic has subsided until we work to prevent future pandemics. For that reason we urge you to act now on medium-term preparedness and prevention policies and funding, as well as on the global response, and take action on the three areas outlined above at the European Council meeting.

We hope to be able to count on your support as we need to take the fight to another level. We would love to work with your team to discuss our recommendations and to amplify any commitments you are willing to make in the near future.

Many thanks for your consideration.

Warmly,

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Pandemic Action Network